

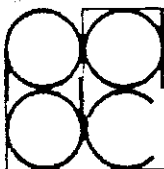
HABS
DC,
WASH,
294-

S. S. Kresge Company
712 E Street, NW
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-580

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA



PENNSYLVANIA
AVENUE
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION

425 13TH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, DC 20004

GENERAL CONSULTANTS

ANDERSON NOTTER / MARIANI
GENERAL PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT

DEVROUX & PURNELL
ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS

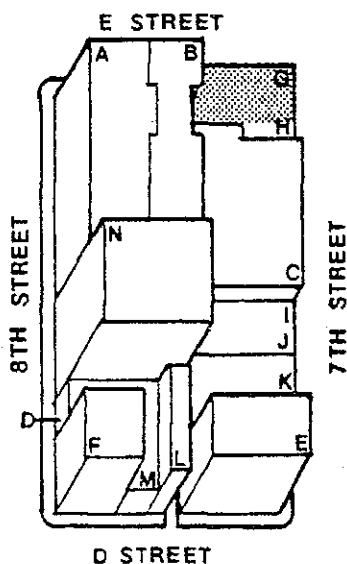
DAVID McLAREN HART & ASSOCIATES
PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT

MONK DUNSTONE ASSOCIATES
COST ESTIMATING CONSULTANT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

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S. S. KRESGE
712 E STREET, N.W.
LOT 806



This documentation was produced for mitigation purposes by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. Additional documentation exists for Square 431, within which this structure stands. For photographs, historical, and descriptive data on Square 431, see HABS No. DC-574.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

At the northeast corner of Square 431 is S. S. Kresge, a two-story 1918 concrete framed building with brick and terra-cotta clad facades. It is situated at the intersection of E and Seventh Streets and its rectangular plan completely covers lot 806. A continuous storefront acts as a visual base to an upper floor which is, in turn, ceremoniously capped by an elaborate cornice. Building dimensions are fifty-seven by one hundred feet by thirty-four feet in height. The building is met at the south by the slightly taller Bag Mart and at the west by the six-story Busch Building.

The structural system is six bays long (east-west) by three-and-one-half bays wide. It is of reinforced concrete columns and slabs.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Constructed in 1918 by Frank L. Wagner and designed by A. B. Mullet and Company, S. S. Kresge's typifies construction methods for commercial buildings during the early 1900s. In particular, it shows the influences of the Chicago school during this period. Structural piers, expressed on the exterior as pilasters, present a somewhat skeletal appearance although the low building height prevents a full exploitation of its potential. The broad expanse of glass of the Chicago windows follows the program customary of this style. However, the lone band of fenestration results in the emphasis on the horizontal axis rather than the vertical as was characteristic in the style. A strong and ornate terra-cotta cornice further emphasizes the already low appearance. The detailing, however, portrays a consciously decorative awareness.

The remodeled storefront, an excellent example of the Art Moderne style, remains slightly jarring in its relation to the upper mass, although it reiterates the horizontal sweep of the facades.

Harmonious to the materials and details used on the other two facades on the 700 block of E Street, S. S. Kresge's considerably lower mass creates a volumetric incompatibility with its neighbors.

Nevertheless, the building itself remains successful in its design achievements and presents itself as a strong landmark. This building, like Herman's World of Sporting Goods in Square 407-C, maintains its visual individuality in spite of its adjacency to the surrounding tall, ornate structures. Both Kresge's and Herman's act as competent corner anchors in this commercial artery.

SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

Facade: Both of Kresge's facades carry the same bay motif. At the base, the 1930's streamlined storefront consists of a continuous band of show windows connecting the two perpendicular facades with a rounded corner at the northeast. Recessed entrances occur at the first and third bays south of this corner in addition to one at the next to the last bay from the northwest corner. A service bay is positioned in the westernmost bay. Above the show windows is a ribbon of red glazing on a striated metal fascia. Both sections sweep across the entire ground floor elevations. Continuous strips of aluminum molding lie parallel to the upper and lower edges of the glass band. Aluminum letters spelling "S. S. Kresge Company" are mounted along this strip, once on each facade. Retractable awnings project above the window frame.

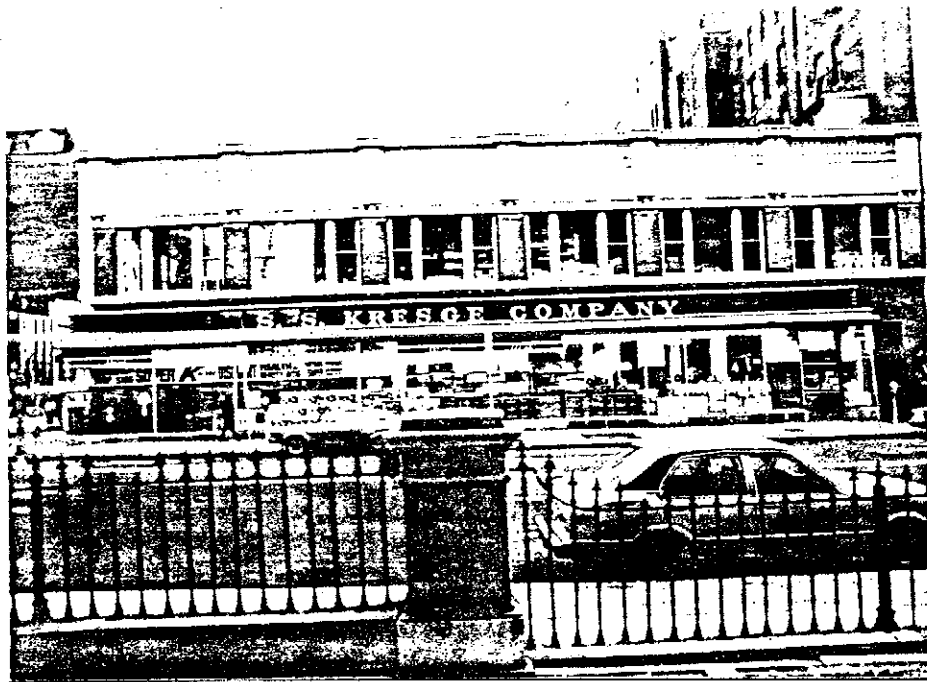
Chicago windows, comprised of a broad central fixed lite of plate glass and narrow side lites with double-hung sash, repeat along the entire second floor. Greyish-brown pressed brick pilasters equal in height to the window openings establish the 6 and 3 window bays on E and Seventh Streets, respectively. An additional half-bay at the south end of the Seventh Street facade reflects the original function of this bay as an entrance to the upper level. The sill line on all windows is underscored by a corbel table. Each terra-cotta block of the sill is inscribed with a cartouche surrounded with vine and leaves. Modillions positioned under each joint support this stringcourse. A band of dentils extends between the modillions. The roof parapet is expressed as a blind attic level. It features an elaborate terra-cotta frieze and cornice above the second floor lintel. The pilasters remain expressed in this area but are clad in terra-cotta tiles with elaborate relief decoration. This consists of a stylized torch surrounded by a pattern of intertwining grape leaves. A voluted corbel supports each of these decorative elements. Six foot high transom panels, clad in glazed terra-cotta tiles, are positioned between the pilasters above each window. The top and bottom edges of the panels are marked with a string of dentils. Each panel is distinguished by a relief frame in a delicate grapevine motif. Above the transom is a frieze of larger tiles, each one decorated with a stylized crest and encircled with a wreath of vine and leaves. At the top, an overhanging band of coping blocks runs the length of the roofline and juts outward as it crosses each pilaster.

Interiors: The retail areas on the first and basement levels are basically open. On the first and second level there are hardwood floors. In the northeast section of the first floor is a terrazzo surfaced straight-run open stair leading to the basement level. A sweeping Art Moderne aluminum railing encloses the

stairwell. Along the west wall is a concrete staircase which joins the first and second floors. Along the south wall is another straight-run staircase with terrazzo treads. A freight elevator accessible from both inside and outside on E Street is located in the northwest corner.

On the ground level retail area, two wood-paneled vestibules, probably original to the 1918 construction, are positioned at each end of the Seventh Street facade. Moldings articulate the interior wall surfaces into panels along all sides of the space's perimeter except the north. Some panels feature a raised plaster escutcheon with a "K", an old Kresge's logo. All columns are plastered and carry simple molding suggesting capitals.

The second floor is partitioned into office spaces along the east. The remainder is open in plan and presently used as a stockroom. Two skylights occur at the roof, on the second and third structural bays along the western section. A restroom is located in the south or rear bay along the same axis.



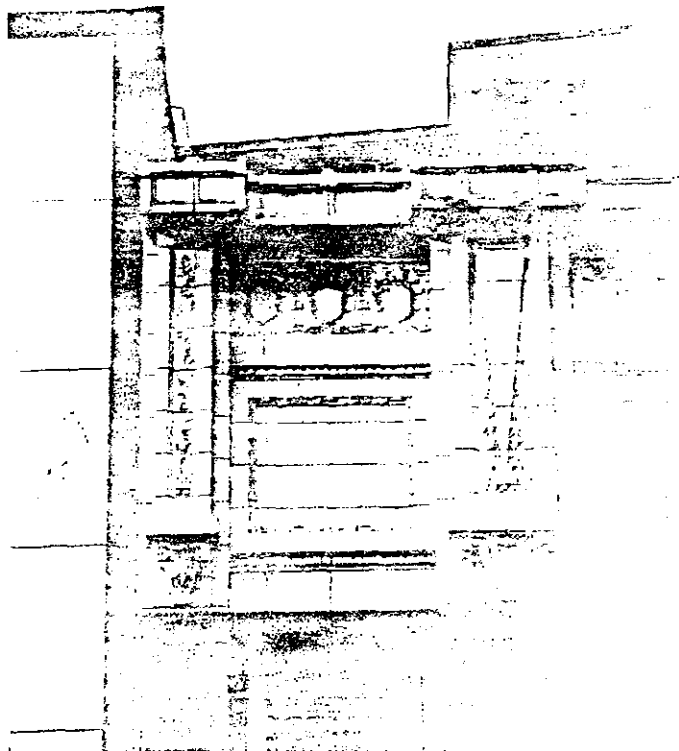
E STREET FACADE: NORTH



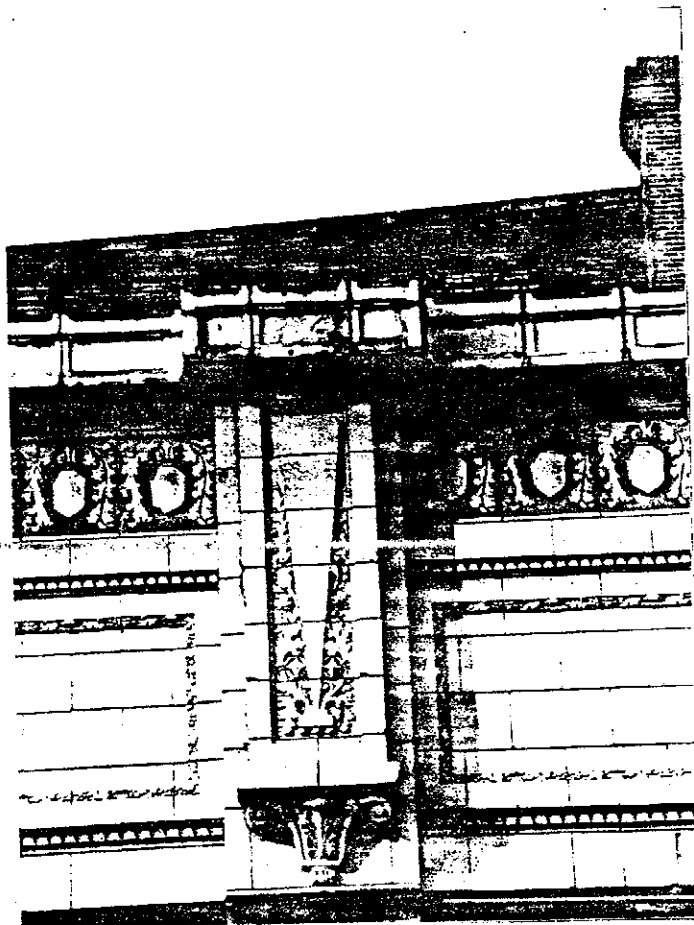
SEVENTH STREET FACADE: EAST



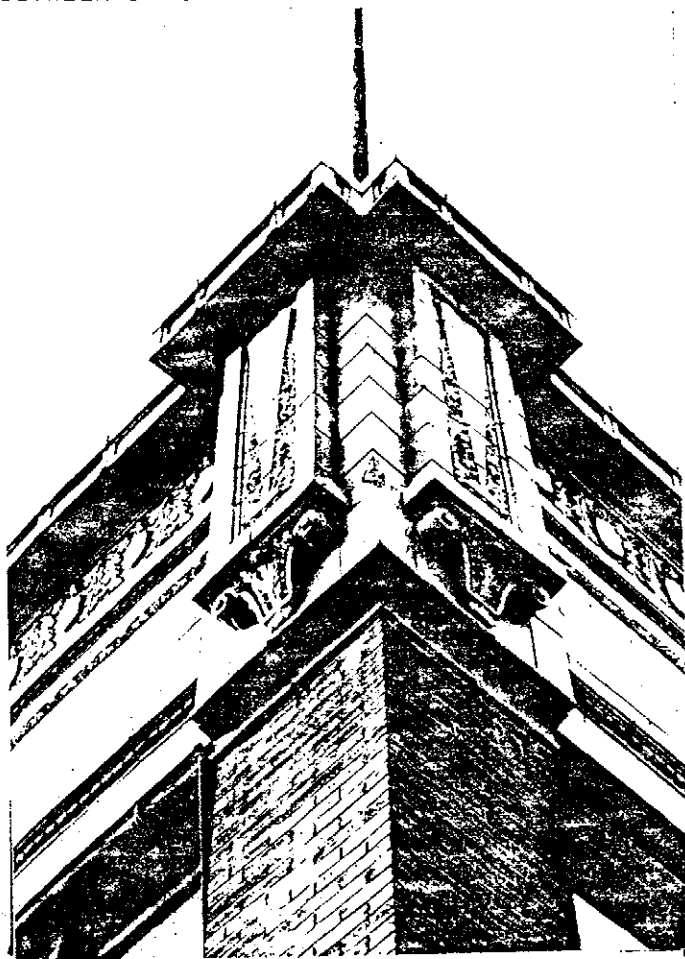
E STREET FACADE: DETAIL OF TYPICAL
WINDOW BAY



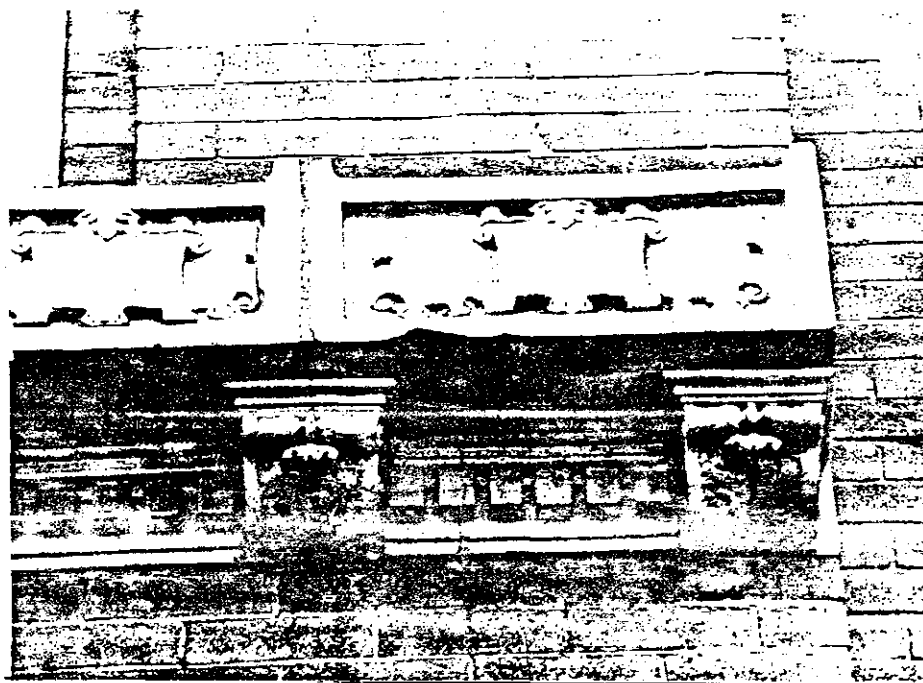
SEVENTH STREET FACADE: DETAIL OF
IRREGULAR BAY AT SOUTHERN END



E STREET FACADE: DETAIL OF PILASTER
BETWEEN BAYS



DETAIL OF PILASTER AT NORTHEAST CORNER



E STREET FACADE: DETAIL OF CORBEL TABLE ABOVE STOREFRONT



E STREET FACADE: DETAIL OF FACIA ABOVE
STOREFRONT AT WEST END



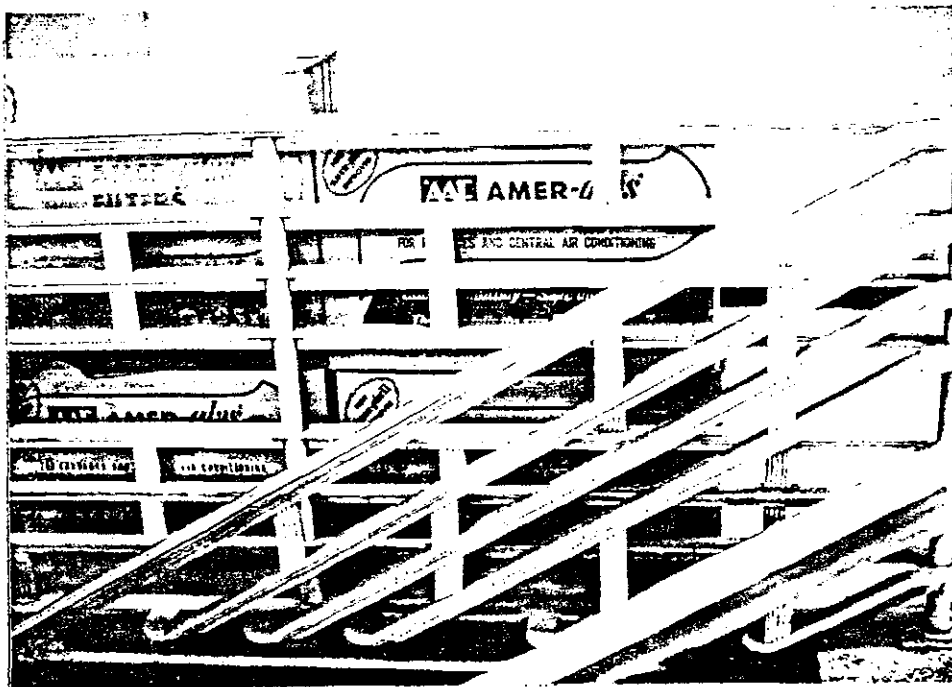
NORTHEAST CORNER OF STOREFRONT



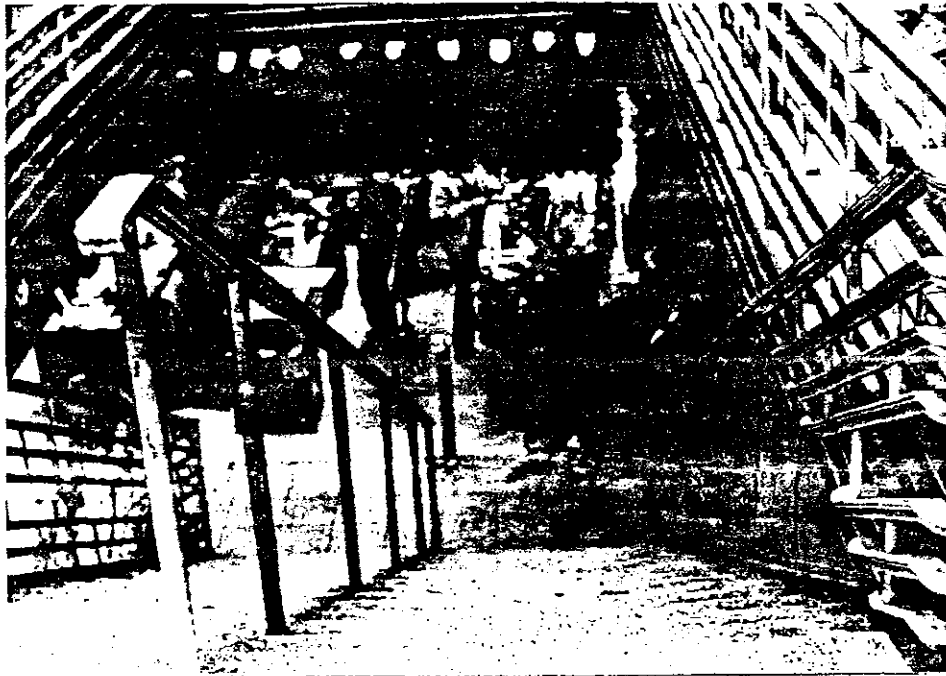
SEVENTH STREET ENTRANCE AT NORTHERN END



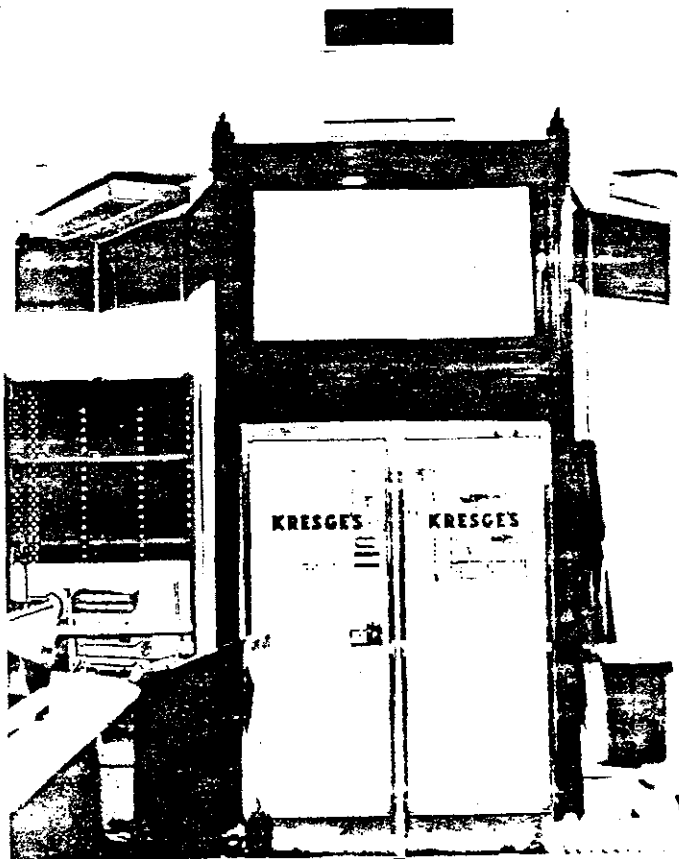
DETAIL OF ART DECO BANNISTER



DETAIL OF ART DECO BANNISTER



TERRAZZO STAIRS AND ART DECO BANNISTER LEADING TO LOWER LEVEL



INTERIOR AT SEVENTH STREET ENTRANCE

Lot A (Sublot 806)
434 7th Street

Lot A, located in a northeastern section of the square, was rectangular in shape.

1872/73

and

1878/79...An assessment of \$5,376.00 was entered in the tax records, to Michael Talty.

1883/84...The value of Talty's lot had risen to \$6,272.00.

1892.....The building was partitioned in the rear (Hopkins Plat Map).

1893/94

and

1899/

1900.....Talty's assessments were \$7,168.00 for the lot, and \$4,000.00 for improvements.

1897

to

1906.....Lewis S. Kann & Sons, a jeweler/watchsmith, was located at 434 7th Street.

1919.....The lot became part of Sublot 806 (Baist Plat Map).

1935

to

1981.....S. Kresge Company, a department store, has been established in the structure. Refer to Sublot 806 for additional information.

Lot B (Sublot 806)
700-704 E Street

Lot B was a slender rectangular area in a northeastern section of the square. It was first listed in the tax assessment records in 1872-1873.

1872/73...Michael Talty owned the lot until 1899-1900. He was assessed \$7,764.00 for his lot.

1877

to

1908.....Various barbers had established shops at 704 E Street: Joseph Gatto, John Wilson, Samuel G. Featherstone.

1878/79...The property was valued at \$7,125.00.

1883/84...Talty's assessment decreased to \$4,898.00, and the "background" area was given a \$1,573.00 assessment in the name of Milford Fishman (Fishman owned this subdivision until 1899-1900).

1889

to

1912.....Daniel and Katie A. Buckley, restaurant owners, were located at 702 E Street.

1892.....The Hopkins Plat Map indicated Lot B with a rear subdivision inaccessible from E Street.

1893/94...The front property was assessed \$7,836.00 for the lot, and \$3,500.00 for improvements. The background included \$1,573.00 lot assessment, and \$1,000.00 improvement assessment.

1899/

1900.....Talty's assessment was unchanged, and his improvement value decreased by \$500.00 to \$3,000.00. Fishman's assessments were \$2,516.00 (lot), \$800.00 (improvements).

1905

to

1919.....Restaurant owners predominated at 700 E Street.

1919.....Baist Plat Map indicated the joining of Lot B with Lots 12, C, O and A. Refer to Sublot 806 for additional information.

Lot C (Sublot 806)
438 7th Street

Lot C occupied a slender rectangular area in a northeastern section of the square.

1872/73
and

1878/79...The lot was assessed to Michael Talty for \$7,133.00.

1879

to

1886.....Restaurants, owned by David Hagerty, J.E. Talty, Harvey & Holden and H.I. Elwood, were established at 438 7th Street.

1883/84...The lot value was \$8,152.00, still in the name of Talty.

1889

to

1900.....A druggist, Arthur Nathans, was the tenant.

1892.....A partition wall was constructed in the rear of the building, running north-south (Hopkins Plat Map).

1893/94

and

1899/

1900.....The assessment increased to \$10,190.00 for the lot, \$3,000.00 for improvements to Talty.

1915

to

1918.....Dr. Smith (inc.), dentists, had occupied the building.

1919.....The Baist Plat Map showed the joining of Lots 12, B, C, D and A to form Sublot 806.

1920

to

1921.....S. Kresge Company has been established on the site. Refer to Sublot 806 for further information.

Lot D (Sublot 806)
436 7th Street

Lot D was a rectangular lot, located in a northeastern quadrant of the square.

1872/73

and

1878/79...Michael Talty, owner, was assessed \$4,230.00.

1883/84...The lot assessment was \$4,935.00 to M. Talty.

1888

to

1906.....John E. Mattern, cigar/tobacco dealer, was listed in the City Directories as tenant.

1892.....The Hopkins Plat Map indicated a rear, north-south partitioning in the building.

1893/94...The land value increased to \$5,640.00 with an improvement value of \$2,000.00.

1919.....The Baist Plat Map indicated the joining of Lots 12, B, C, D and A to form Sublot 806.

1920

to

1981.....The building has been used by S. Kresge Company as a department store. Refer to Sublot 806 for further information.

Lot 12 (Sublot 806)
706-708 E Street, 434-438 7th Street

Lot 12 was situated in a northeastern quadrant of the square. It originally measured 23.6' x 100'. Around 1919 the lot combined with Lots B, C, D and A to form 806.

1819.....The western property was owned by John S. Love. William Kidd owned the eastern portion.

1824.....The owners were Love and Richard Henley. Their assessments were \$475.00 (lots) and \$2,000.00 and \$650.00 (improvements), respectively.

1829/33...Hannah Allen now owned Love's western property, while Henley was still listed. The lot assessment for both sections was \$625.00.

1844.....The owners' assessment was \$1,000.00 (lot).

1859.....Hannah Allen and Michael Talty were both assessed \$5,000.00 (lots).

1870.....The owners were both assessed approximately \$2,750.00 for improvements made.

1870
to

1875.....Intermittently established at 708 E Street were lawyers, real estate agents, architects, insurance agents.

1872/73...Lot 12 now assumed one ownership, this to Michael Talty. The lot was valued at \$7,500.00.

1878/79
and

1883/84...Listed as occupying 708 E Street (1879) was a lawyer, notary public, newspaper company, real estate agent, printer, jeweler and artist.

Talty's lot value decreased to \$6,250.00.

1880
to

1906.....Edward F. Buckley, who sold cigars and tobacco, was the tenant at 706 E Street.

1892.....The Hopkins Plat Map indicated two areas on Lot 12, however the smaller eastern section was not accessible from the street.

1893/94...Talty's assessment reached \$10,000.00 (lot) with \$3,000.00 for improvements.

1899/

1900.....The assessment to Talty decreased to \$9,375.00 for the lot.

1911.

to

1916.....Fred A. Sabbs, a barber, was the tenant (City Directories).

1918

to

1919.....706 E Street was listed as vacant.

An April 16 Building Permit (#2828) for 702-706 E Street to raze the building "piece by piece". Contractor: Frank L. Wagner.

1919.....Baists Real Estate Atlas indicated the merging of Lot 12 with Lots B, C, D, and A. Refer to Sublot 806 for further listings.

Sublot 806
434-438 7th Street

Sublot 806 was located in the northeast corner of the square, an area which measured 100' x 57'. It was formed through the joining of original Lots 12, B, C, D and A.

1918.....Building Permit #2828, April 16 for 702-706 E Street to raze the building, "piece by piece". Contractor: Frank L. Wagner.

Building Permit #3815, June 19: Permission to erect one two-story brick store 100' x 57' x 34'-0" with basement and five show windows, two vaults. Architect: A.B. Mullett Company. Contractor: Frank L. Wagner. The structure has been used by S. Kresge Co. from 1920 to 1981.

1934.....Building Permit #171399, May 17: To install a Class "D" refrigeration system. Contractor: J.C. Harding; Refrigeration Machinery. Contractor: Conditioned Air Corp. Cost: \$5,000.00.

Building Permit #172,209, June 15: To install one freight elevator. Contractor: Otis Elevator Company. Cost: \$3,500.00.

Building Permit #173,989, August 29: Make revisions to original plan; to add a 16" x 20" dumbwaiter from basement to first floor, add a ten-ton cooling unit to second, change walls around fixture unit in basement.

Building Permit #174,105, September 1: To install one Class "D" refrigeration system. Contractor: J.C. Harding Company.

SOURCES

Baist Real Estate Atlas

Bastert and Enthoffer Plat Maps

Boyd's City Directories

District of Columbia Building Permits

District of Columbia General Assessment Records

District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds

District of Columbia Surveyor's Office Records

District of Columbia Tax Records

Hopkins Real Estate Atlas

Polk's City Directories

Property Map for Downtown Urban Renewal Area for District of Columbia Redevelopment
Land Agency

Sanborn Insurance Map